



GET PREPARED: PRACTICE YOUR INTERVIEW SKILLS!

FACILITATOR GUIDE

SESSION OVERVIEW

This 40 minute session allows students the opportunity to prepare for a mock interview experience in order to practice and develop their interview skills. A series of worksheets and checklists creates a systematic approach for students to plan and ready themselves for their interviews.

** This Pick Up and Go Kit is designed as a follow-up activity to the "Get Hired: Develop Great Interview Skills!" kit. Please cover the information and activities in the "Get Hired: Develop Great Interview Skills!" kit before proceeding with the information and interview preparation outlined in this kit.*

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Students will develop answers to typical interview questions.
2. Students will experience the process of preparing for an interview.
3. Following the mock interviews, students will recognize areas of interview strength and areas requiring improvement.

MATERIALS

"Mock Interviews – Step-by-Step!" – Instruction Sheet for Teachers

Mock Interview Feedback Form

Handout 1 – Learning your Lines: Basic Interview Questions Worksheet

Handout 2 – Mock Interview Summary Sheet

Handout 3 – Mock Interview Preparation Checklist

Handout 4 – Mock Interview Assessment Form

Thank You Notes/Cards

OVERVIEW AND TIMELINES

Introduction – Practice Makes Perfect!	3 Minutes
Learn your Lines!	20 Minutes
Remember your Lines!	10 Minutes
Wrap Up	7 Minutes



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ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION – PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT!

As a method of introducing this session, explain the following points to the students:

- that an opportunity has been (or will be) organized for them to experience a one-on-one mock, or practice, interview.
- that they will be preparing for this interview as a practical way for them to develop, practice and improve their interview skills.
- that taking part in an interview within a learning environment will give them valuable feedback that will benefit them in future interviews.

Note: The “Mock Interviews – Step-by-Step!” Instruction Sheet, located at the conclusion of this Facilitator Guide (page 5), outlines in detail the progression of steps required in the process of organizing mock interviews for students.

LEARN YOUR LINES!

Building on the information in the Pick Up and Go Kit “Get Hired: Develop Great Interview Skills!”, review with the students that it is possible to prepare responses, or answers, to the questions they will experience in interviews because many of the same questions are asked in all interviews.

Remind students that this type of preparation – learning their lines – will raise their confidence, decrease their nervousness and allow them to answer the questions appropriately and with specific, relevant details and examples.

Distribute **Learning your Lines: Basic Interview Questions Worksheet** (Handout 1).

Explain to students that this worksheet will assist them in deciding how they could answer some of the typical interview questions they will experience in their mock interviews.

Provide the following directions to students:

- Indicate the shaded text boxes that accompany each question.
- Encourage students to read through the tips, suggestions and examples in each of the text boxes and then write down points they would like to include in their answers to each of the questions.
- Remind students that it is important to keep the requirements of the position in mind so that their answers will be relevant to the position being interviewed for.



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Allow students approximately 15 – 20 minutes to individually complete **Learning your Lines: Basic Interview Questions Worksheet**.

Note: While the information and examples in the shaded text boxes of Handout 1 “Learning your Lines: Basic Interview Questions Worksheet” pertain to answering questions for a job interview, this does not preclude students mock interviewing for volunteer work, school council position, school trip selection or another non-employment opportunity.

REMEMBER YOUR LINES!

Explain to students that it can be beneficial to record important points they would like to mention to an interviewer and questions they would like to ask the interviewer on a sheet of paper that they can take into the interview.

Inform students that it is acceptable for interview candidates to bring such a sheet of paper into an interview. Not only will it help them make sure they remember what they want to say – their “lines” – but it also demonstrates to the interviewer that they are organized, prepared and enthusiastic.

Distribute **Mock Interview Summary Sheet** (Handout 2).

Instruct students to complete the “Mock Interview Summary Sheet” using the information they recorded on the “Learning your Lines: Basic Interview Questions Worksheet”.

Suggest that students refer to “Q & A Preparation – Know your Stuff!” (Handout 1 in Pick Up and Go Kit “Get Hired: Develop Great Interview Skills!”) for suggestions on questions to ask the interviewer.

Allow approximately 10 minutes for students to complete the **Mock Interview Summary Sheet**.

Upon completion, remind students that they may take this summary sheet into their mock interviews to help them remember their lines.

WRAP UP

Distribute a copy of the **Mock Interview Assessment Form** (Handout 4) to each student.

Review each of the points of assessment with the students as outlined on this form.



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Remind students that this is a learning opportunity and that positive, constructive feedback will be provided to each of them by their interviewers in order to help them improve their interview skills for future use.

To clarify that the learning objectives have been accomplished, ask the students these questions:

Do you understand the value of having a practice interview experience?

Have you prepared answers for each of the ten questions you may be asked during your mock interview?

Do you understand the importance of taking into an interview a summary sheet of important points you would like to mention to the interviewer and questions you would like to ask?

Are you aware of the criteria that the interviewers will be using for assessment during your mock interview?

**** One day prior to the scheduled mock interviews, distribute a copy of the "Mock Interview Preparation Checklist" (Handout 3) to the students. Use this handout as a method for students to self-check their level of readiness and preparation for their mock interviews the next day.***



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MOCK INTERVIEWS: STEP-BY-STEP! INSTRUCTION SHEET FOR TEACHERS

Organizing a mock interview experience for students provides an excellent learning tool that puts into practice the information covered in the Introductory Pick Up and Go Kit "Get Hired: Develop Great Interview Skills!". Listed below is a set of instructions that may be used to coordinate the details necessary when organizing mock interviews.

- ☐ Select a date for the mock interviews. It is recommended not to schedule the mock interviews for a Monday so that reminders to students can occur the day prior.
- ☐ Schedule class time, well in advance of the mock interview date, for the students to:
 - Complete Handout 1, "Learning your Lines: Basic Interview Questions Worksheet". (*Note: the interviews should focus on the area targeted in the students' resumes.*)
 - Complete Handout 2, "Mock Interview Summary Sheet".
 - Review Handout 4, "Mock Interview Assessment Form".
- ☐ Allowing no less than 15 minutes per interview, determine how many interviewers you will need in order to accommodate the number of students being interviewed within the particular time frame you have available.
- ☐ Select, contact and book interviewers using the following criteria:
 - Interviewing and hiring experience
 - Willing to provide meaningful and constructive feedback in a positive manner
 - Suggestions: school administrators, parents, community members, business ownersIndicate to all interviewers that this is a learning opportunity for students and that constructive yet positive and encouraging feedback is expected. Inform interviewers, if applicable, that this is not a hiring opportunity.
- ☐ Coordinate and book locations within the school to conduct simultaneous interviews. It is advisable to schedule interviews in locations that will not be disturbed by general school activity.
- ☐ In advance, email the interviewers with a reminder of the **date, start time** and **duration** of the interviews and attach the following handouts so they are aware of how the students have been prepared and have an opportunity to become familiar with the assessment form they will be using during the mock interviews.
 - Handout 1 "Mock Interview Summary Sheet"
 - Handout 4 "Mock Interview Assessment Form"
 - From "Get Hired: Develop Great Interview Skills!" PUGK Handout 1 "Q & A Preparation – Know your Stuff!"
- ☐ Inform interviewers of the suggested structure within the 15 minute interview time frame:
 - 8 minutes – questioning
 - 2 minutes – immediate verbal feedback to students
 - 5 minutes – completion of "Mock Interview Assessment" form and written feedback
- ☐ Develop a schedule, assigning each student an interviewer and a time slot. Beside each student's name record the job or opportunity that the student is interviewing for.
- ☐ The day before the interviews, distribute and review with the students Handout 3, "Mock Interview Preparation Checklist".
- ☐ Organize a package for each interviewer that includes:
 - A schedule listing students' names, interview times and titles of specific jobs or opportunities being interviewed for
 - Sufficient copies of the "Mock Interview Assessment Form" (Handout 4)
 - A copy of Handout 1 "Q & A Preparation – Know your Stuff!" from "Get Hired: Develop Great Interview Skills!"
 - A copy of the "Mock Interview Feedback Form" (available in Facilitator Guide – Page 6)
- ☐ Have students sign and then present a thank you card to each interviewer.
- ☐ Collect "Mock Interview Assessment Forms" and "Mock Interview Feedback Form" from all interviewers.

Emphasize to the students that the more seriously they approach this mock interview opportunity the more they will learn about interviewing and the value of both preparation and presentation.



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Mock Interview Feedback Form

Name of School: _____ **Date:** _____

Please take a few moments upon completion of your interviews to answer the following questions. The information you provide will help the mock interview process to be enhanced and also provide excellent general feedback to the students.

1. What did you like about this mock interview activity? How did you benefit?

2. What were the overall strengths of the students?

3. What are suggested areas of improvement for the students?

4. Do you have suggestions for how this process could be improved?

5. What would you, as an employer, like to stress to students?

Name of Interviewer: _____



LEARNING YOUR LINES: Basic Interview Questions Worksheet

Interviewers are looking for more than “Yes” or “No” answers to their questions – they want detail and proof! To prepare for answering some of the typical questions you may encounter in an interview write down important points you would like to mention in the space provided below each question. Always keep the requirements of the opportunity being interviewed for in mind! The shaded boxes outline suggestions and tips on what you need to know about that question and what you may want to include in your answer.

1. Would you please tell me about yourself?

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS:

- This is one of the toughest questions to answer well!
- Often asked at the beginning of an interview so you want to create interest in yourself
- Interviewers are really asking, “What have you done in the past that has prepared you for this job or opportunity?”
- Include the following in your answer: two or three introductory points about yourself, some information about experiences you have had that makes you a good candidate for the job and finally a closing point of interest to wrap up your answer.
- It is very important that you display self-confidence and enthusiasm for what you have done
- Note: If the “Tell Me About Yourself” Activity from the Introductory PUGK “Get Hired: Develop Great Interview Skills!” was completed, the answer to this question will be ready.
- **EXAMPLE:** “I love all kinds of sports especially team sports like volleyball and basketball. I was on my school teams this year. I also play competitive soccer in the spring and summer. Because I enjoy sports so much I think I would really enjoy working as a sales associate at your sports store. Also, I am trying something new this year – I am registered to go into a triathlon so am training for that.”

Introductory points:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Experiences/ skills/ knowledge that make me a good candidate for this position:

- _____
- _____
- _____

Closing point of interest:

- _____

2. Why are you interested in this position?

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS:

- Interviewers want to know that you want the job, not need the job.
- Employers do not want to hear that you have applied because you live close, you need a job, you want money, your parents want you to get a job.
- Your answer should show enthusiasm and your motivation for applying for that specific job.
- For example, would you like the type of work you will be doing? Would you like the environment you will be working in? Do you like the product or service you will be providing?
- **EXAMPLE:** “I am interested in this position as a pet care associate because I have several pets of my own at home and I love animals. I am even thinking that I might like to do some kind of veterinary work as an adult.”

Two reasons why I want this position are:

- _____
- _____

3. List three skills that you would bring to this position. How did you develop these skills?

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS:

- Think about the top skills required for the position. Do you possess these skills? Some of them? All of them?
- If so, list three of them and provide details of situations where you have demonstrated and developed these skills or characteristics.
- Using the information on your completed resume will help with this.

• **EXAMPLE:**

Name of Skill: handling cash How developed: handled cash accurately at school concession, strong basic math skills, assisted with cash ticket sales for school dance

Name of Skill: reliable How developed: hand in school projects and assignments on time, consistent attendance for hockey team practices and games

- Skill #1: _____
How developed: _____
- Skill #2: _____
How developed: _____
- Skill #3: _____
How developed: _____

4. What do you understand the main responsibilities of this position to be?

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS:

- Answering this question well will demonstrate that you have done some research or are familiar with the expectations of the job and the variety of tasks you will be doing.
- The interviewer will learn whether you have realistic expectations of the job.
- **EXAMPLE:** A grocery store courtesy clerk would: bag customer's groceries, load groceries into customers' vehicles, collect carts in parking lot, assist cashiers with price checking, clean up spills. OR, A retail clerk would assist customers, promote sales, stock shelves, operate a cash register, count money, sweep floors, take out garbage.

Three duties of this position might be:

- _____
- _____
- _____



5. What is an area of weakness that you possess?

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS:

- Focus on a weakness related to the job or opportunity, not a character trait.
- Think about the duties and requirements of the job. Is there something you need to be able to do or know for that job? If so, that is your weakness!
- EXAMPLE: "I have never operated a cash register but I am a quick learner and a good math student." OR "I have not been involved in sales before but I am outgoing and have excellent communications skills."

Something I don't know how to do yet in relation to this job:

• _____

6. What do you know about this business / organization?

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS:

- You will stand out from other candidates if you can answer this type of question well.
- Do some research before you go to the interview.
- What? – company / organization information, mission statement, products, services
- Where? – websites, visit and observe the business or organization if possible, talk to employers
- EXAMPLE: "I know that your business opened here about five years ago. I have used some of your products and I like them very much." OR "I noticed on your website that your company has locations in 78 countries and is very concerned about the impact it makes on the environment."

Facts about this business / organization:

• _____

• _____

• _____

7. Can you tell me about a time when you contributed to a team effort?

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS:

- Interviewers like to ask questions like this because the way you have acted in the past is the best predictor of how you will act in the future. So, how well you have worked in a team environment in the past will give them an idea of how you will act as a member of a team now in their work environment.
- To answer this question well you need to do three things:
 1. Think of a specific situation when you have contributed as a team member (eg. sport team, club, drama production, band, group project at school, etc.)
 2. Be able to define your specific role on the "team"
 3. Be able to explain the results of your effort on the "team".
- EXAMPLE: "I was involved in my school's drama production this year. My role was as a member of the stage crew so I had to move and change props and sets on the stage at very specific times. I worked as a member of a team with the other stagehands to do this very quickly so there were no delays between scenes."

- Activity that required a team effort: _____
- My role on the team: _____
- Results of my teamwork: _____

8. Can you tell me about a time when you resolved a conflict with another individual?

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS:

- How you have dealt with conflict in the past will tell interviewers how you would most likely deal with conflict in the future.
- Employers want their employees to be able to get along and to deal effectively with conflict if it arises on the job.
- To answer this question well you need to do two things:
 1. Identify the situation where you encountered conflict.
 2. Explain how the conflict was resolved and the role you played in its resolution.
- **EXAMPLE:** "A couple of months ago I was working on a group project at school. One of our group members was not doing her share of the work. I decided to talk to her about it and tell her that it was important that we all do our parts equally. She said that she hates drawing and that she wasn't happy about having to draw all of the diagrams for the project. I don't mind drawing so I offered to switch with her. She was happier typing up the descriptions that I was to do and she got them done on time. At first, I wasn't sure how it would go, talking to her, but it worked out great and I learned that it is better to talk right to the person rather than getting mad or going to the teacher for help."

- Type of conflict situation: _____
- My role in resolving the conflict: _____

9.

TIPS / SUGGESTIONS:

- Interviewers often wonder what your long range goals and plans are so they can see if the work you will do for them or the skills you will develop through the job link to your future goals in any way.
- You could potentially make a more motivated and enthusiastic employee if the skills you will gain on the job will benefit your future in some way.
- Demonstrating that you have given thought to what you would like to do in the future shows a certain level of maturity.
- **EXAMPLE:** "I really like the outdoors and science so I think I might like to work as a landscaper. I am also kind of creative so I could maybe be a landscape designer. This summer job as a landscape assistant will give me a better idea about this kind of work." OR, "I am planning on going into an engineering program after high school. I like to be outside and I am ready to work hard landscaping this summer to save money for school."

What are your plans for the future?

- _____
- _____



10. Why should I hire you?

Handout 1 – Page 4



TIPS / SUGGESTIONS

- This question is often asked near the end of the interview.
- Summarize why you want the position and the best skills you would bring to the position.
- Emphasize what you offer that you believe makes you different from all of the other candidates.
- Demonstrate enthusiasm!
- EXAMPLE: "You should hire me as a golf cart maintenance assistant because I love both golf and being outside! I work well in a team environment and have good communication skills so would get along well with my co-workers and supervisors. I also have experience serving the public through my past work as a cashier at a fast food restaurant. And, one of my home chores is washing and cleaning my parents' vehicles inside and out. I would really like to work here!"

Final summary points I would like to make:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____





MOCK INTERVIEW SUMMARY SHEET

Name: _____

Name of position interviewing for: _____

Name of business or organization: _____

Three things I would like to tell the interviewer about myself are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

I am interested in this position because:

Skills I have that are needed for this position are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Examples from school, volunteering, extracurricular activities or work that prove the skills listed above are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

The greatest strength I offer is: _____

An area of weakness I have is: _____

Three duties, tasks or activities I might perform in this position would be:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

An example of a time when I contributed to a team effort:

Activity that required a team effort: _____

My role on the team / what I did and how it helped: _____

An example of a time when I resolved a conflict with another individual:

Type of conflict: _____

My role in resolving the conflict: _____

Two things I know about the company or organization are:

1. _____
2. _____

Two of my long range plans for the future include:

1. _____
2. _____

I am the ideal person for this position because:

Questions I have to ask the interviewer are:

1. _____
2. _____



MOCK INTERVIEW PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Are you ready? Review the following checklist to make sure that you are fully prepared for your interview.

- ☐ I have completed the “*Learning your Lines: Basic Interview Questions Worksheet*”.
- ☐ I have summarized and transferred my answers from the “*Learning your Lines: Basic Interview Questions Worksheet*” to the “*Mock Interview Summary Sheet*”.
- ☐ I have reviewed and practiced the information I recorded on the “*Mock Interview Summary Sheet*”.
- ☐ I have reviewed the “*Mock Interview Assessment Form*” and am familiar with all of the requirements.
- ☐ My resume is completed.
- ☐ I have a copy of my resume printed off to bring to the interview
- ☐ My resume is paper clipped together if it is more than one page in length.
- ☐ I have practiced my handshake and introduction.
- ☐ I will remember to shake the interviewer’s hand at the beginning and at the end of the interview.
- ☐ I have planned what I will wear to the interview – something that is appropriate for the position I am applying for.
- ☐ I have reviewed Handout 3 “Give Yourself an “Edge” – Quick Tips for Great Interviews!” (from the Introductory PUGK “Get Hired: Develop Great Interview Skills!”).



MOCK INTERVIEW ASSESSMENT FORM

STUDENT: _____

GRADE: _____

POSITION APPLIED FOR: _____

NAME OF COMPANY / ORGANIZATION: _____

INTERVIEWER: _____

DATE: _____

	Needs Work	Satisfactory	Well Done	Outstanding
PRESENTATION: The First Impression!				
1. Arrived on time				
2. Introduced self clearly, smiled and made eye contact				
3. Demonstrated firm handshake				
4. Appeared neat and clean				
5. Dressed appropriately for position (clothing, jewelry)				
PREPARATION:				
1. Handed interviewer a polished resume upon arrival				
2. Prepared for basic interview questions – minimal response time, sufficient detail, specific examples				
3. Demonstrated understanding of duties and skills required for position				
4. Displayed knowledge of the business, company or organization				
5. Asked questions about the position, company or organization (minimum 2)				
INTERVIEW SKILLS:				
1. Spoke clearly and maintained eye contact throughout interview				
2. Displayed positive body language – sat straight, feet on floor, leaned forward, managed nervousness, controlled gesturing, no gum chewing				
3. Consistently answered questions appropriately, linking personal abilities and experiences with requirements of position				
4. Answered questions genuinely and with confidence				
5. Demonstrated enthusiasm and sincere interest in position				
CLOSING IMPRESSION:				
1. Thanked interviewer				
2. Initiated firm handshake				

*Note to teacher: If you wish to assess this activity with a numerical value, you may assign a value to each descriptor. (Suggested values: 5, 6-7, 8-9, 10)

Comments:
